United Nations S/2001/55

Security Council

Distr.: General
18 January 2001

Original: English

Letter dated 17 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to refer to the letter addressed to you by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon dated 5 January 2001 (S/2001/14) in which he requests the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

The allegations contained in the letter of the Lebanese representative are as strange as they are disturbing, particularly in light of the regular assaults on Israeli soldiers and civilians emanating from Lebanese territory which have occurred, and continue to occur, along our common border. I have detailed these violations in a series of letters over the past several months, most recently in my letters of 26 November 2000 (S/2000/1121), 23 October 2000 (S/2000/1011), 19 October 2000 (S/2000/1002) and 7 October 2000 (S/2000/969).

In addition to the ongoing violations of the Line of Withdrawal by Lebanese civilians in the vicinity of the Phatma Gate, who engage in stone throwing, attacks with Molotov cocktails, and other manner of provocation, there have been a number of more serious incidents, including the kidnapping of three Israeli soldiers from Israeli territory by members of the Hizbullah terrorist organization on 7 October 2000 (S/2000/969), the killing of an Israeli soldier by a roadside charge on 26 November 2000 (S/2000/1121), and an attempted terrorist infiltration on 20 October 2000 (S/2000/1011).

The Government of Lebanon has not only failed to prevent these violations and acts of aggression, it has even supported and encouraged them. Regrettably, these actions have also been supported by the Governments of certain neighbouring States known for their support of terrorism.

It is therefore not the actions of Israel, but those of Lebanon, which stand in direct contravention to Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 1310 (2000). In withdrawing its troops from South Lebanon in May of 2000, Israel has already fully complied with its obligations under resolution 425 (1978) as confirmed by the Secretary-General (S/2000/590) and endorsed by the Security Council (S/PRST/2000/21) and referred to in Security Council resolution 1310 (2000). The responsibility now falls chiefly to the Government of Lebanon to fulfil its commitments pursuant to resolution 425 (1978) and exercise its effective authority in the area and ensure the return of peace and security to our common border.

Unfortunately, despite Israel's repeated urgings, the Government of Lebanon has failed to take the steps required of it under resolutions 425 (1978) and

01-21715 (E) 180101

1310 (2000). The Government of Lebanon has failed to "ensure the return of its effective authority and presence in the south, and in particular to proceed with a significant deployment of the Lebanese armed forces as soon as possible" and "ensure a calm environment throughout the south" (S/RES/1310, paras. 6-7). Of the Lebanese Army's 65,000 soldiers, only a few hundred have been deployed in South Lebanon, none of them along the border with Israel.

The Government of Israel categorically rejects the Lebanese allegations and calls, once again, on the Lebanese authorities to fulfil their obligations under resolutions 425 (1978) and 1310 (2000), to effect the return of law and order to South Lebanon, to put an end to these violations of Israeli sovereignty, to establish effective authority by deploying the Lebanese armed forces in the area, and to bring peace and security, at long last, to our common border.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative